

Neighborhood Planning for Community Revitalization

Implementing the Stevens Square-Loring
Heights Common Social Services Plan:
An Examination of the
NiCo Employment Project
by Courtney Knox

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for the Stevens Square Community Organization

***and the Neighborhood Planning
for Community Revitalization***

June 1996

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Stevens Square-Loring Heights Common Social Services Plan addresses a combination of regional and local strategies aimed at achieving the neighborhoods' goal to "enhance economic security of the least well-off residents" of the community. To accomplish this goal, the Stevens Square-Loring Heights community plans to develop an employment, training, and job placement program. Aspects of the NiCo employment project may serve as a model for implementation of the community's goal.

The NiCo employment project, as it has come to be known, is a complex program. It has become very successful, increasing livable wage opportunities for neighborhood residents and increasing the retention rate for a neighborhood employer. It originated through Minneapolis Community Development Agency's dealings with NiCo, an electroplating company in the Whittier neighborhood of Minneapolis. The project's beginnings are also attributable to the foundation of the neighborhood's past dealings with the employer. Currently, NiCo is hiring 6 people every two months. It is primarily hiring clients of Loring Nicollet Bethlehem (LNB) and the Whittier Alliance's Whittier Works program (WA). NiCo is expecting to hire approximately 100 people as a result of recent expansion. Many parties are involved in aspects of this project, including the Minneapolis Employment and Training Program (METP).

This evaluation is primarily concerned with identifying the strengths and challenges of the NiCo employment program in an effort to replicate its success for the Stevens Square-Loring Heights neighborhood. The populations of Whittier and Stevens Square-Loring Heights are assumed to be similar enough that a similar program is expected to achieve similar success in the Stevens Square-Loring Heights neighborhood. Data collected in interviews with the current program's participants is the primary focus of the evaluation. This data has been difficult to collect from program participants. Many of them are no longer reachable. Many of those that have been reached have not shown up for their in-person or phone interviews. However, the data gathered will prove useful for the employment program of Stevens Square-Loring Heights in terms of providing general information about the strengths and weaknesses of the NiCo employment project from the perspective of the employer, the program participants, and the program service providers. Suggestions and recommendations for program implementation conclude this report.

There is another component of this project occurring simultaneously. It is intended to examine the alternative strategies' feasibility of targeting employers for the prospective target population. The other component further explores strategies proposed by the Stevens Square-Loring Heights Common Social Services Plan, the regional (reverse commuting) and local (job development in the neighborhood, business retention and attraction to the neighborhood) strategies of which an employment program such as the one existing at NiCo would be one component.

INTRODUCTION

Disturbing demographic trends have motivated to the Stevens Square-Loring Heights community to extend efforts into employment and economic development issues. The United States is witnessing a growth in lower wage service industry employment. This is exacerbated in Minnesota by a growing difference between the inner central cities and the suburbs. Median income in Stevens Square-Loring Heights is lower than that of the city as a whole, suggesting those who are working in the SS-LH community are earning less than average or are under-employed. Predominantly the community's residents are employed in service occupations, as defined with the exclusion of protective and household services.

The Stevens Square-Loring Heights neighborhood, largely made up of older structures and one bedroom units, was reported to be experiencing significant unemployment and poverty in the 1994 City of Minneapolis State of the City report. While the city enjoys a very low unemployment rate, hovering around 2%, the neighborhood faced a 12.9% unemployment rate in 1994. In this community, a little less than one third of the residents are estimated to live below the poverty level, including "more than 60% of neighborhood children." (1) The target population of the Common Social Services Plan and the employment project forthcoming will be that of low-income families who have dependent children for this reason.

The Stevens Square-Loring Heights Common Social Services Plan emphasizes efforts to enhance the capacity of neighborhood residents to become more self sufficient, thereby improving the economic situation for years to come. The plan's development was guided by several principles; asset-based planning, developing new initiatives, choosing a focus and an area of greatest potential impact, taking into account broader trends and initiatives, while keeping in mind opportunities for partnerships with other neighborhoods.

The emphasis of the regional strategy is to identify Twin Cities industries that are expected to continue to experience growth in the region, pay livable wages, and have a need for low-skill labor. This strategy will target three industries in particular, relying on the data gathered by the Metropolitan Council's Twin Cities Industry Cluster Study. The three (of four) areas of manufacturing expected to continue growth and targeted by the SSCO-LH plan are printing & publishing, machining & metalworking, and medical device making. The local strategy hopes to support local employers, "thereby supporting the local economy, and to provide employment opportunities free of transportation obstacles for neighborhood residents." (1) This strategy will target health care providers.

The program is expected to develop a 'holistic approach,' using a network of multiple agencies working in collaboration to minimize the effect of some of the issues facing the low income residents of the community, those in the target group defined as the "least well-off." These services will be provided by agencies specializing in child care counseling, youth job shadowing and mentoring, etc. The program may also develop and utilize a reverse commuting program to enhance the opportunity of the community's residents.

The Common Social Services Plan has defined eight program characteristics as necessary. It is expected that the program will:

- tailor to regional and local labor market conditions
- be holistic in its approach to employment
- recognize employers as customers
- provide support to the resident/client post placement to facilitate job retention,
- compensate service providers for results
- incorporate and institutionalize tracking and assessment tools, use quantitative and qualitative assessments of success (including feedback from program participants)
- utilize a plan for recruiting and outreach
- improve efforts of coordination and communication between service providers

The SS-LH community is considering the NiCo employment project as a model for achieving its goal of employing the harder to employ of their community.

This employment program may serve as a model due to its efforts at incorporating many of the program characteristics that the Common Social Services Plan calls for. It has also enjoyed an overwhelming success rate, 51% of those sent to NiCo by the referring social service agencies have been hired. This has provided 24 residents with the opportunity to earn a livable wage. The NiCo employment project has also contributed to the rise in the retention rate at the electroplater three fold, decreasing the employer's costs and time associated with the hiring process.

It is imperative to examine all the elements and variables of the success of this program in order to identify opportunities for replication of its success.

THE ACTORS

NiCo

NiCo started in older garage spaces in the early 1970's as Minneapolis Electroplating. It has since grown to be the largest electroplater of the Upper Midwest. The company received \$5 million in financial assistance from the MCDA (Minneapolis Community Development Agency) to build a 42,000 square foot addition to their current facility. NiCo employs approximately 120 people, of which about 73% live in surrounding neighborhoods. "The company expects to hire an additional 100 employees within two years. To facilitate the expansion, MCDA acquired six residential properties, relocated the tenants and demolished the buildings to make way for the new facility," Minneapolis Community Development Agency, *New Developments* dated January 22, 1996. This expansion has doubled the company's production space.

At NiCo, there is a full benefits package available including health insurance, short term disability, retirement plan, and education financial assistance. NiCo also encourages its employees to obtain their GED. The company offers an intensive electroplating training program. Upon completion, employees become "certified electroplaters and surface finishers." NiCo has the largest number of employees in the nation who have completed the 18 month long training program and passed the certification examination. The owner has noted that people employed by the company for a period of time tend to move to other areas. NiCo is still considered a small business and has no staff devoted to human resource related functions. Traditionally, approximately 10% of the people they would hire would be 'long term,' considered to be "2-5 years." The company is located in Whittier and faces this same core labor force during this time of expansion.

The Whittier Alliance and Loring Nicollet Bethlehem

These two agencies provide the recruitment, assessment, orientation and training, and the program's follow up social services.

Whittier Alliance is a community organization serving the residents of the Whittier neighborhood. Their mission is to "create a safe, inclusive, vital, and respectful community." The Alliance strives fulfill this mission through its programs and services dealing with issues of community safety, economic development, housing (loans and assistance with locating and purchasing homes), and outreach/advocacy of residents, including a focus on youth and family.

Loring Nicollet Bethlehem is a NET, one of many "neighborhood employment networks", a vendor of the city's employment and training program, serving all residents of the city of Minneapolis. LNB provides educational and social services primarily. It offers STRIDE resources to AFDC mothers and fathers, administers an employment program to assist residents of group homes, offers an alternative high school, as well as adult, junior high, elementary, preschool education programs. Educational programs include also adult basic literacy, English as a Second Language, GED preparation, and summer programs for youth.

Minneapolis Employment and Training Program

The Minneapolis Employment and Training Program disperses employment and training funds to 30 different community development sites. Having them involved as a temporary employer enables NiCo to give the employees a higher wage per hour than they would were they to go through a different temporary employer. METP does not pay unemployment insurance because this type of program falls under their training assistance programs. For the first 60 days of NiCo employment, employees receive \$6.50 per hour from METP, which receives \$8.00 from the employer. This \$1.50 covers the fringe benefits and the worker's compensation for each employee. If a temporary agency were to play the role that METP does, it would also need to be paid to cover each employee's unemployment insurance.

PROGRAM HISTORY

NiCo's Relationship with the Neighborhood - Historical Perspective:

The Whittier Community Development Corporation (CDC) works in small business support; providing financial assistance and working with a micro business training program. It's committee makes recommendations to their City Council person. The committee also reviews zoning regulations. NiCo came to the committee expressing an interest in doubling its plant size. For the project, it was necessary to rezone half a block and purchase 3 residential buildings including one section 8 housing unit, and assist with some bond financing. Whittier helped NiCo with the review of the zoning restrictions.

A project of this size and scope needed neighborhood support to get to the implementation phase. It is not traditional for industrial projects to get neighborhood support, according to John Florey, director of the Whittier CDC. Whittier was interested in the project provided it met 3 conditions:

- knowing that plating companies have a high tendency to increase pollution, the neighborhood organization asked NiCo to demonstrate that the company would not increase pollution by using air scrubbing devices
- Whittier wanted some review authority over the design and architecture of the structure, to see that it would fit into the community and be relatively attractive.
- to be assured that company has plans to hire from the neighborhood.

The program emerged in response to this last condition. The theory that economic development funds do not go directly to residents led to efforts on the part of the Whittier Community Development Corporation and the Whittier Alliance to work in collaboration with the management of the electroplating company. The neighborhood felt that business typically advertises openings and takes best candidates, which are not usually Whittier residents. Traditionally, in Minneapolis, the MCDA will label the purpose of the funds they grant to employers. The purpose may be to encourage economic development, thus creating jobs incidentally by removing blight or insuring the provision of a service. The MCDA may spend money to facilitate the retention of employers or the creation of new jobs. If the purpose of the grant is job creation, it is intended that the NET will be notified of openings. This relationship, a Joblinkage agreement, has not always generated neighborhood employment.

NiCo agreed to the conditions and they began to talk about prospective employment programs to insure that the hiring of the residents actually took place. During these talks, the neighborhood learned that NiCo did not like the traditional employment programs that had used the NETs, they had worked with in the past. The company felt that these programs typically did not respond to their needs, working with them and for them as well as their clients. NiCo had also been enjoying a relationship with temporary employers because they needed to try out their employees before hiring them permanently.

THE PROGRAM EVALUATION

The Stevens Square-Loring Heights Common Social Services Plan calls for the enhancement of the economic security for the "least-well-off" residents of their community. This effort is expected to assist the development of self-sufficiency and stability of residents. The plan calls for a local and regional strategy. Stevens Square-Loring Heights chose to examine the NiCo employment project as a possible implementation strategy to accomplish the goal set forward by the Common Social Services Plan.

Purpose of Evaluation

The Stevens Square Community Organization is interested in modeling this employment program and applying it to Stevens Square-Loring Heights residents. The purpose of the evaluation is to define keys to the success of the NiCo employment project for replication purposes in the Stevens Square-Loring Heights neighborhood, targeting its population of families with children. The neighborhood has contracted with Loring Nicollet Bethlehem to serve as the primary service provider for their employment project targeting employers in the community as well as regional employers that fit the industry clusters expected to continue a period of growth in the Twin Cities. There will be a variety of other organizations assisting LNB towards this goal. This program evaluation's purpose is to define the key factors to success of the program which may, in turn, be applied to the new effort.

Type of Evaluation

The evaluation will be a process evaluation. It is hoped that the evaluation will produce some recommendations for best practice as the Stevens Square-Loring Heights neighborhood begins a collaboration with Loring Nicollet Bethlehem and its partner agencies. It will also serve to offer suggestions toward program improvement of the existing employment project as it explores what is going well (strengths) and what is not going as well (weaknesses) from each of the parties' perspectives.

The Stevens Square Community Organization is interested in modeling this employment program and applying it to Stevens Square residents. It has contracted its NRP (Neighborhood Revitalization Program) funds for economic development to LNB as the primary service provider of a program with similar goals. There will be a variety of other organizations assisting LNB towards this goal. This program evaluation's purpose is to define the key factors to success of the program which may, in turn, be applied to the new effort.

Program Evaluated

What evolved was an employment program aimed at serving the company's needs and that of the neighborhood and its residents. Prospective employees would be recruited, assessed, provided orientation and follow up (including intervention on behalf of employer or employee or social service referral as needed) by the Whittier Alliance and Loring Nicollet Bethlehem. Initially, throughout the 60 day probation, program participants would be paid through an agency functioning as a temporary employer, the Minneapolis Employment and Training Program.

Employees hired on permanently would be eligible for the company's training, allowing the opportunity to become a certified electroplater, as well as its general education benefits. The program entails outreach/recruitment, assessment, orientation and minimal basic job skills training, follow up and intervention supportive social service referral.

Stakeholders

- Stevens Square Community Organization (SSCO) -initiated the program evaluation, interest in recreating similar program, hiring both research assistants.
- NiCo -the employer of the program participants, an electroplating company, initiated the program by attending a Whittier neighborhood meeting and requesting assistance with zoning regulations.
- Loring Nicollet Bethlehem (LNB) -one of the program service providers, services primarily focus on employment assistance, education (GED), administering STRIDE program, etc.
- Whittier Alliance (WA) -one of the program service providers, a neighborhood organization, working with the employer to insure economic development assistance would benefit neighborhood residents.
- Whittier Community Development Corporation (Whittier CDC) -working with neighborhood and employers to retain business and assist small business development.
- Minneapolis Employment and Training Program (METP) -contracting with employment service providers, no direct service delivery, serving as a temporary employer for the NiCo employment program.
- neighborhood residents/program participants -obtaining livable wage employment, employment training assistance and supportive service.

Program Inputs

Program inputs are the elements that go into the program to create the intended results. Inputs for this program are the counseling personnel at LNB and the community organizer at WA, the program population, the program activities, and mission or motivation for the program.

Originally there was a recruiting effort that took place as part of the first contact with the potential client. However, at this time, due to increasing popularity of the program, the efforts of the service providers are primarily involved with screening. The staff at LNB have responsibilities, employers, and other types of programs outside of the project, as does the community organizer at WA. The community organizer is beginning to work with other neighborhood employers, in conjunction with NiCo. His primary function is to serve the needs of Whittier neighborhood residents as defined by the neighborhood. One primary function of LNB is to serve the employment needs of Minneapolis area residents, including but not limited to Whittier neighborhood residents. The facilities used for client assessment are existing on site at both LNB and WA. The training of the applicants is done at LNB. There is also a tour arranged on site at NiCo. The rest of the follow up, required by METP for the first 60 days (probationary period) takes place at the referring agency.

The funding for the program is derived from backfunding the clients into Jobs Training Partnership Act or Year of the City programs. These two programs have specific target populations. The eligibility criteria for the JTPA program is a very low income. Often a very

low income level is accompanied by a significant employment barrier such as long term public assistance, disability of some sort, or having been an offender. The main priority of the JTPA program is to target persons with very low incomes. Acknowledging that there may be some persons who may be working poor, earning some income but not generating enough income to move them out of poverty. The goal of this program is to offer these persons the opportunity to earn as high a wage as possible. Thus, clients referred by LNB, the primary service provider for the program, and the Whittier Alliance must be JTPA or Year of the City eligible at a minimum. Targeting these populations by working with these two programs, not only provides funding for this program, it also allows for targeting those who could potentially benefit from using this opportunity as a transition to better paying job or transitioning out of being harder to employ, without much work history. Making JTPA and Year of the City eligibility a bottom line criteria offers a safety net and general oversight to the program, ensuring that program participants deserving opportunity. METP provides incentives for 60 day retention. There is no payment for services rendered without employee retention.

The participants in the program are expected to be drawn from the general population arriving at the LNB social service center and those inquiring about employment in the project at either LNB or WA. Occasionally participants may be recruited from the targeted residents of the Whittier community and (rarely from) just outside its borders. This population is expected to consist of the "underemployed" and/or "harder to employ" area residents.

Program Activities

The first program activity is to recruit individuals interested in full time livable wage employment from the neighborhood. These individuals will be assessed and informed of the process for NiCo employment. It varies at each location (as emphasized by the service delivery maps found in Appendix 1 and 2), however the general process is as follows. Potential client learns of employment opportunities through a variety of methods: recruited at community meetings, independent interest in NiCo and referral to agency, through word of mouth, arrival to service provider for other reason. Client self selects for a NiCo job. Client is assessed. These activities vary at each of the agencies involved. At the Whittier Alliance, the client first fills out an application and is asked to call in for an appointment. Clients attend an information session about NiCo and the program. Interested parties will contact the community organizer for an interview. The selection and assessment processes are not formal. Those interested attend a tour of the facility. At Loring Nicollet Bethlehem, there are a number of counselors who assess and interview prospective NiCo employees. Interested clients are informed of the program and the hiring process. Clients are then moved onto a waiting list. From the waiting list, they may be invited on a company tour. The company will call for six new employees, of which each agency chooses three. At this point, the counselors come together to discuss the client's qualifications and three are referred to orientation.

Top candidates attend a walk through tour of the NiCo job site. Of those still interested, three are selected by each referring agency. The six candidates attend a 2 full day orientation at LNB presented by both service providers. The training is primarily concerned with general work readiness skills (i.e., to arrive on time, daily, not to punch out your boss...) and some basic job safety.¹

¹ APPENDIX 1, Program Activities: Recruitment and Assessment

Following the start date, there are 2 week pay periods. For the first two months (probationary period) NiCo pays METP, who functions as a temporary employer. This allows NiCo the ability to avoid paperwork for worker's compensation and unemployment insurance, as it would with a private temporary employer. METP then pays out the salary to the employee. The employee comes into the service provider to pick up his/her check. At this time, the counselor/community organizer reviews the accompanying job performance evaluation. This allows the opportunity for the client to be aware of any feedback and allows the service provider to approach any issues unrelated to the employer that may be hindering the employee's performance.

Intervention may occur at any time due to the employer's or employee's request. Intervention could be a variety of social service referrals or provision and generally begins with the foreman recognizing a redflag behavior and contacting the service provider for assistance. The employee does not lose a day in the probationary period while any issues are addressed. If an issue occurs on day 41 of probation, the employee can return to day 42, rather than beginning again at day 1 of probation.²

Program Outputs and Outcomes

Outputs will be 60 day NiCo employees, earning livable wage. Anticipated outcomes are permanency with the company, further enabling the client to experience longevity in employment (even if not with NiCo). The continued relationship of the client with their counselor during the probationary period is expected to open the door for self-sought intervention-like services if needed in the future. The program may also produce outcomes related to self-esteem and financial security for the clients.

The company is prepared to offer training in certification of electroplating. They also encourage further education goals of their employees. For NiCo, it is expected that the outcomes of the program will strengthen their relationship with the community, increase their skilled workforce, and increase their retention rates. In the larger vision, it is expected that these jobs will encourage economic development of the neighborhood and build community.

Possible Unanticipated Outcomes

There is speculation about the degree to which clients, once they have attained permanent positions, stay in the neighborhood. Any investment on the part of the neighborhood may be difficult to undertake if the benefits are difficult to derive and maintain. It may be possible that this program evaluation reveals that the most successful approach towards the employment of the area's residents is handled by a balance of the two service delivery styles (and not the LNB approach - with which Stevens Square has contracted to perform the operations of their "Common Services Plan"). The LNB approach is primarily oriented to the client as the customer while the WA approach orients itself more with the belief that the employer is the customer. These two beliefs lead to two styles of service delivery. LNB may be more inclined to offer an opportunity at NiCo to a client they may have extended other opportunities which had not worked out well in the past. At WA, there may be a reluctance to offer second or third chances to program participants. This may be a function of the historical relationship LNB has developed with some of its clients. It may be, with time and a larger clientele of residents, that WA develops longer-term relationships with program participants. It may also be possible that it is found that the

² APPENDIX 2, Program Activities: Intervention and Personal Relationship

program may not be reproducible, due to situation-specific aspects that factor into the WA/ NiCo/ LNB relationship.

Intervening Conditions

There are many things that are beyond the direct control of any of the actors in the program's implementation that could alter the outcomes. It may be that the success of the client could have occurred without the support services provided by the program. It may be that the demographics and skills background of the program participants are specific to the type of employment offered.

Unemployment could rise, changing the dynamics of the population seeking employment. This could mean that the harder to employ/underemployed would not be the only people with interest in the program. On the other hand, the population could also reach true full employment; there may not be enough clients in the neighborhood in need. If the economy were to slow, NiCo's rate of induction of new employees could slow as well.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND DATA COLLECTION

Research questions can be divided up into three subject areas. A complete list of research questions and interview questions may be found in the appendix.³

- **PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS:** How can the program be improved upon? What is working well? What aspects of the orientation are useful? What is not working well? What is the "best" (greater success) method/approach between the two providers? How is the greatest success arrived at-in NiCo employment? -ability to obtain and retain livable wage employment (beyond NiCo)?
THESE QUESTIONS WILL ADDRESS CURRENT PROGRAM PROVIDERS NEEDS AND INTERESTS AND WILL BE GATHERED FROM PROGRAM PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS.
- **COSTS OF PROGRAM RE-CREATION:** Does the long term social service provision/availability (including the training) increase the ability of the harder to employ/underemployed to obtain and retain livable wage employment? What components of the program must occur to insure success of the individuals? How long does intervention need to be made available?
THESE QUESTIONS WILL ADDRESS FEASIBILITY ISSUES FOR STEVENS SQUARE-LORING HEIGHTS POPULATION AND WILL BE GATHERED FROM PROGRAM PARTICIPANT AND PROGRAM PROVIDERS INTERVIEWS.
- **IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES:** What are the benefits to the employer? What are the benefits to the neighborhood and its residents? How effective is the collaboration of providers? *THESE QUESTIONS ARE DESIGNED TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT BEST PRACTICE FOR DEVELOPING NEW EMPLOYER CONTACTS AND COLLABORATIONS WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS. DATA WILL BE GATHERED FROM INTERVIEWS WITH PROGRAM PROVIDERS, EMPLOYER, AND OTHER HISTORICAL INFLUENCES ON THE CREATION OF THE EMPLOYMENT PROJECT.*

Data Collected and Relevance to Research Questions

The data will be collected from the sample of participants interviewed, 15 were interviewed of the 47 overall program participants. It is expected that this data will answer questions around program improvement, effectiveness of current recruitment, outreach, assessment, training, follow up and intervention support services. This information will also serve to further elaborate on data collected in other fashions and assist program implementation in the Stevens Square-Loring Heights neighborhood.

Data will also be collected from the employment forms of participants in the NiCo project (listing race, gender, age, residence, family size, public assistance received) for comparison purposes with the population expected to be served by the Stevens Square-Loring Heights program. Data on the demographics of the Stevens Square-Loring Heights residents is available from the census.

Program coordinators will also be questioned. NiCo management and the foreman of the company will be interviewed to determine the impact of the program on the company. The program delivery staff at the Whittier Alliance and at Loring Nicollet Bethlehem have been

³ APPENDIX 3, Research Questions

interviewed. The extent of the interviews with all staff will be determined by time available. This information should provide insight about program improvement and collaboration. Interviews with staff will also serve to validate information gathered through participant interviews.

Sample Population

The sample population will be drawn of the 47 participants to date.⁴ The agencies have provided listings of participants. One of the organizations has further selected participants for contact on the basis of assumed difficulty of connecting with participants. The total sample available is expected to be about 38 participants. 15 persons were interviewed.⁵ Participants are expected to be the target population, predominantly Whittier neighborhood residents. It is expected that this population has had difficulty for one reason or another in obtaining livable wage employment. The program is expected to lessen this difficulty.

STUDY DESIGN

Interviews, both in person and over the phone, will be conducted with program participants, social service providers, the company, Minneapolis Employment and Training, and the Whittier CDC.⁶ The sample population will be drawn of the 47 participants to this date. Some of the population have moved and are difficult to locate. There may also be some selection bias due to the fact that few arrive for scheduled interviews or are available for scheduled phone interviews. Data may not accurately reflect opinions of those leaving the program for this reason. The interview questions may be found directly after the program evaluation, in the appendix.

The data collected through the interviews of participants will not be statistically significant as it represents a limited portion of the sample. The data's only purpose will be to provide themes about the program and its success.

The sample population of the NiCo project will be compared to that of the prospective population, Stevens Square-Loring Heights residents. This comparison will cover demographic information to determine the relevance of data gathered (keys to success, etc.) to the goals of the Common Social Services Plan. For example, one goal is to target families for livable wage employment. If the population served by the NiCo project differs substantially, if there aren't many family members served, it may be that the intervention strategy is not suitable for the target population of Stevens Square-Loring Heights. It may also be that the employment opportunities offered at NiCo were not of interest to the participants similar to the target population. It may also be that factors other than the program intervention could affect the NiCo participant population and the Stevens Square-Loring Heights target population differently, thus decreasing the effectiveness of such an intervention.

⁴ APPENDIX 4.1, Program Population

APPENDIX 4.2, Population Staying at NiCo

APPENDIX 4.3, Population Leaving NiCo Employment

APPENDIX 4.4, Applicant Data Sheet tables used

⁵ APPENDIX 5, Sample Population

⁶ APPENDIX 6, Interview Questions

Interviews with program staff, NiCo management, METP, and Whittier CDC are expected to provide some overall context to the program. Data collected in these interviews may also yield some information about the importance of the different variables particular to the success of the program. These variables; the history of the neighborhood's relationship with the company, the historical foundation of the neighborhood organization's strength in assisting companies with zoning and other regulations, the company's expansion project, the receptiveness of the management, the willingness of each party to collaborate, the community organizer particular the Whittier, and METP's interest in taking the temporary employer role, may all be situationally specific but contribute greatly to the program's success. These questions are asked to gather some sense of the ability to replicate the success through a similar relationship.

CHALLENGES

DATA COLLECTION & INTERVIEWER BIAS

Interviews were difficult to obtain with the program population. 15 of the 47 (32%) have moved or have disconnected phones and were not reached. 10 of the participants were not reached after 4 unsuccessful attempts. 7 persons had made appointments but did not arrive for their interviews.

Not only were participants difficult to reach, once reached, they did not always keep their appointments. Although participants were offered phone or in-person interview choices, many were not available at the appointed time, either in-person or by phone. When interviews were conducted, the style of interviews differed, making them less statistically significant than originally possible. Interview styles not only differed when conducted on the phone or in-person, but differences also existed inside each style. Overall, they were not conducted directly off of the questionnaire, when done in either fashion. Originally, the intention was to stick to the questionnaire, however, due to limited time and interest of participants (as perceived by the interviewer) questions were chosen on the basis of the importance of the information each could gather and volatility.

Interviews have been conducted through interpreters, both in Spanish and sign. This was not controlled for. Phone interviews were not conducted similarly to in-person interviews due to time limitations and interest limitations on the part of the participant. Occasionally the children would scream in the background or sports broadcasting would interrupt. Due to the nature of the questions, some more personal than others, efforts were made to put participants at ease to elicit more in depth information in both phone and in-person interviews. These factors could lead to interviewer bias. Decisions were made about the priority of data some of the questions would obtain and some were dropped during the interviews. Questions asked would pertain only to program improvement, interest in reverse commuting, and relationship to service provider. Personal questions about money between jobs, last wage, staying or leaving the neighborhood were occasionally dropped.

EVALUATION RESULTS

Overall, the program has been successful at offering residents livable wage employment opportunities and increasing the rate of employee retention for NiCo. The success of the program is attributable to the design of the program activities and to the other variables that may be specific to the situation, such as the particular employer and the historical relationship. There are opportunities to work with these variables in order to replicate some aspects for the Stevens Square-Loring Heights Common Social Services Plan employment program and its target population.

It is important to note that there are many challenges and limitations to the data. The program population, itself, is small enough that it is difficult to draw any conclusions from the data gathered. It is also difficult to say for sure that the information gathered about the program from the participant interviews is accurate for all of the program's population. It may not accurately reflect the opinions of those who have left the program as interviews were conducted with 5 persons leaving the company's employment. The definition of success beyond NiCo is difficult to verify because so few of the population leaving NiCo were able to be reached, and once reached, may not have had the opportunity to discuss what employment they had since chosen.

The Statistics

The program population tended to be predominantly in the 25-35 year age range, black males, with no dependents. The program population did not vary between those leaving and staying at NiCo in terms of their race, gender, number of dependents, status as offenders, substance dependent, reliance on public assistance, or being employed before entering the NiCo employment project. Those leaving tended to work the second shift, come from LNB (15 LNB referrals and 8 WA referrals were among those leaving NiCo employment), and stay an average of 22 days before quitting or being fired. Those staying tended to be equally distributed across referring agencies, work the third shift, were greater in number of females, and have stayed on average for 5 months.

The population interviewed tended to be similar to the program population in terms of the shift distribution across both those who stayed and those who left, while varying from the population in average length of stay for those leaving. The population interviewed seemed to stay at NiCo longer before quitting or being fired than for the program as a whole. There is also greater representation of those referred from LNB in the interviewed population of those leaving NiCo employment. Those populations interviewed represent a similar trend to the whole program population in terms of wage at last employer. Those leaving NiCo employment tended to earn more at their most recent employer than those staying on, approximately \$1.30 more per hour on average than those remaining in the program. Including those program participants with no recent work history (within a year of filling out the applicant data sheet), this meant that those leaving NiCo were making less on average in probation than they had at their most recent jobs and those staying on were earning more in probation on average than their most recent employment experience.

There may issues be about the strategies used in the program and their relevance to the target population of the Stevens Square-Loring Heights Common Social Services Plan. While the program did not focus on the intended target population of SSCO-LH plan, the strategies used with the program's population worked well, creating livable wage employment for 51% of the

program population. These strategies many not, however, obtain the same degree of success when applied to the target population of the Stevens Square-Loring Heights Common Social Services Plan. The differences between the program participants and the target population for SS-LH may be attributable to factors specific to the program. The group making up the program participants may be a function of the type of job available at NiCo. The fact that this target population does not appear larger in force in the program may also lend credence to the theory proposed by the Common Social Services Plan, that the "perception that Stevens Square-Loring Heights has very few families and children," these populations "tend to be overlooked by service providers" (p. 9).

However, while not reaching many individuals with families (only 40% of program participants had dependents, 17% were single parents and 21% had dependents in two parent families) those that were reached by the program were successful in the program. 6 of the 8 single parents stayed at the company. However, only 2 of the 10 persons with dependents in two-parent families were able to stay on at NiCo. It is unfortunate that it was so difficult to have the opportunity to speak with those who left NiCo employment. It is important to learn about why this population was unable to maintain employment.

There is a tendency among those leaving NiCo employment to rely on temping as a source of income for the period of time between jobs. While not conclusive, 2 of the 4 participants interviewed of this group mentioned temping as a source of income and none of the persons staying at NiCo mentioned temping. Temping, as one participant said, "you get stuck, don't want to turn them down, you want them to keep calling." Of the four persons leaving NiCo employment who were asked, 2 have returned to part time work and 1 has returned to working temporary jobs and one has been working "around town" doing odd jobs as they occur.

The Service Delivery

The project did offer a holistic approach, using a web of service providers which were used in the referral process. This approach was also able to utilize two service delivery styles through collaboration of two types of service agencies. There was not a great deal of data available on the collaboration, the program is still young and this partnership seems to be doing well. The two service providers operate differently from each other but it allows them to capitalize on each other's strengths. While the LNB approach, attempting to treat all the applicants exactly the same, tends to be (self professed) pretty rigid and focused on structure and process, the WA program can do the out-in-the-streets, community organizing things particular to their primary function as a neighborhood organization. A combination of both styles has allowed program participants to choose the style that appeals most to them individually. There is evidence that some program participants have left either of the service providers, preferring the other style of delivery. Overall, the methods used in conducting the program activities received positive reviews from the program participants. Many of the program participants felt that the program should continue just as it is so that the employer and the service providers can be sure that the program participants are interested in full time, permanent employment. There are aspects to each of the program activities that are reproducible and seemed to contribute to the success of the NiCo employment program.

Recruitment

Most of those interviewed who stayed at NiCo had an interest in the company before coming to a referring agency. Recruitment also seemed to work well when referred by other community

service providers to LNB and WA. Program participants reported a tendency of using newspapers, Loring Nicollet Bethlehem, flyers, and going door to door to inquire about employment as their usual way to find employment. One program participant noted that it was "not hard at all through LNB" to find a job. This ease at finding jobs through LNB may be part of the reason that all three of their direct referrals interviewed have left NiCo employment.

However, some type of outreach may be necessary as about half of those interviewed feel that it is hard to find a job. Longer responses to this question included statements about how it was not hard to get a job, it is only hard to get a job that pays a wage that one can live off of. These sentiments were echoed by others qualifying their statements with phrases like, "not really hard, depends on the type of job" and that it was hard to find a "good job." Situations particular to some members of the target population were that it was hard to find a job with children or that it was hard "especially when you are hearing impaired without much of a work record." Others felt that "transportation is key." One person mentioned that if "you are willing to work, lots of jobs out there," and also said that part time jobs are easier to locate than full time.

As some of the program participants point out, there may be an over-riding behavioral or motivational issue with this population. One half of the population interviewed felt that it was not hard to find a job. This belief is documented by behavior; on average, persons in the population interviewed tended to have 3 jobs per year, 2.86 job per year for those staying at NiCo and 4.25 for those leaving.

Assessment

While the NiCo employment program provides entry level employment opportunities, the skills of program participants interviewed seemed to match well with the job. Only one of the program participants interviewed did not have warehousing, factory, or other previous skills that were not related to the work that they were expected to perform at NiCo.

This population may be different from the population of the neighborhood as a whole as well as that of the program. The data sheets compiled through the METP role offer opportunity for other issues to come up that may hinder a participant's success. Issues such as previous chemical dependency, being an ex-offender, potential childcare issues may be identified in the assessment interview. It is expected that the personal relationship between the service provider and the program participant, aided by the weekly follow up, will flesh out any indications of a problem during employment. This relationship aided all but one of the program participants who felt that their reason for leaving was attributable to a situation in which the service provider could have been of assistance.

One of the program participants is now in a training role at NiCo. He felt that there should be more screening of program participants, perhaps including a background check, some kind of skills test, or weight lifting or math minimum requirements.

Orientation

While not many interviewed remembered the two day orientation, and some did not attend, the response was generally positive about the orientation. Occasionally, participants were brought into the program as replacements for those who dropped out during their two month cycle. Orientations were conducted when 6 participants were scheduled and the employer had called in to request new recruits, generally every two months.

One person felt that the movie on chemicals present at the electroplater gave insight to the plant and the job. It may be helpful, when designing a new program to focus the orientation on employer specific training and information. The service providers also noticed improvement in the performance of those sent in as part of a six person orientation session. This may be helpful to replicate. Providers began to bring in permanent employees to the orientation sessions as well. There is no data collected on the effect of this addition but the providers noticed greater interest in the questions generated by the visit.

Walkthrough

All of the program population interviewed felt that it was helpful to get insight about the plant from going on the NiCo tour before deciding to pursue the employment opportunity. There were some suggestions made for improvement of the walkthrough. One program participant noted that she would have appreciated some information about appropriate dress for the tour.

Weekly follow up/Time sheet

Most of the population interviewed were positive about the role of the time sheet-performance review. 5 of those interviewed were not positive about the current time sheet/performance review system, however 4 of those persons are still employed with the company. With this sample, it appears as though the dislike of this aspect of the program was not a large enough factor for them to leave the program.

Some felt that the time sheet was helpful, that it was "good to know how you are doing," and appreciated the face to face communication, keeping everything out in the open. While some liked the weekly routine, others were annoyed by it. Program participants mentioned frustration with the low grades on pay sheet for performance. One person suggested greater use of a comments section so that the grades could be explained. Three people felt that phoning in for review would have been sufficient.

Service provision & Intervention

The personal relationship is an essential part of the service provision and intervention. Because "they were so helpful with the problems I had," "easy to talk to, great to me," the service provider was able to help provide referrals to daycare and transportation. NiCo did not count the time against the program participants' probationary period after some type of intervention had occurred. One participant labeled the service provider as a "go between, preventing the fear of hierarchy, between you and the supervisor."

For the most part, the interviewed program participants were positive about their experience with the service providers. 10 of 13 asked were positive about their relationship with the service providers. However, some were not satisfied with the particular style of service provision and there was one case (in the interviewed population) in which a program participant felt sure that the service provider was aware of her childcare problems that inhibited her from staying in the program.

The Personal Relationship

All of these activities of the program are designed to increase the program participant's success through the development of a relationship with the service provider, thus shielding the employer from the issues that the participant may have. The potential employees are considered high risk

and events in their lives may interfere with their ability to be an employee. The personal relationship aids the mission of the project and the service delivery. One important characteristic is the role of the service provider is as an advocate of employee, making the service provision and intervention feasible. Through a series of personal interviews, meeting with the same person follows through the 60 days, picks up their pay check, runs over their evaluation form for a minimum of 6 months, hopefully a year, a personal relationship is fostered. Each of the three persons interviewed who gave negative responses about their relationship with the service providers is still working at NiCo. While it would appear that the personal relationship would not have an effect on this population, it is important to note that this may not be a representative sample.

More of the program participants were positive about the service they had received at LNB and an overwhelming number have maintained a relationship with their counselor, beyond the 60 day probationary period or beyond NiCo employment. Some program participants mentioned that the counselors were "friendly and helpful" and two mentioned their surprise that they were getting check up calls now and again. One participant felt that she could still go to them for assistance if she needed even though she is now a permanent NiCo employee. One participant mentioned how thankful he had been for the opportunity to discuss personal issues with his counselor, so that the issues did not get in the way of his job. However, of those interviewed who had learned of the NiCo program directly through LNB, all three had since left NiCo employment. It is important to note that this population is not representative of the whole sample and there may be selection bias attributing to that result. Those who were available to be interviewed were still in contact with the service provider. One aspect of the Whittier Alliance approach that was different from the LNB approach was that it worked through a community organizer, originally recruiting from building meetings. The community organizer is said to have experiences in common with the people in the program population. He also has a personal relationship with the business. This allows the employer a one-stop connection to their employees and the community.

THE VARIABLES

While many of the factors that lead to the continued success of the NiCo employment project may be situationally specific, there may be opportunities to facilitate the creation of similar aspects.

The Employer

The interest and flexibility on the part of NiCo, the owner and lead foreman, are key factors in the success of this program. One of the program participants was pleased with the company for giving "a person a chance" in a case in which the employee was sure that any other company would have fired him. All of the program participants interviewed felt positively about the job and all but one person interviewed (was) is planning to stay at NiCo for the foreseeable future.

Working with employees through a 60 day probation period, committing to the weekly performance review, allowing employees to return to work after intervention without losing the ground they had made in probation, providing training and educational assistance, and respect for the neighborhood organization, allowing the neighborhood such authority may be specific to the NiCo company. Much of this commitment to the community can be derived from the owner's core beliefs. The owner of the company firmly believes that "success builds success." The project is "a community effort, not necessarily a business effort, it is a sense of neighborhood that you have to develop." The employer believes that the key is not only to find a business that is

willing but to find a community organizer who has many different qualities, allowing the person to gain the trust of both the clients and the employer.

There are incentives for employer involvement as well. This employment program has lowered the risk associated with the hiring of each employee, lessened the time and involvement it takes to find and hire each employee, and increased the rate of employee retention. This program has also given the employer an outlet for approaching perceived problems with employees. The foreman can call directly to a service provider and ask them to look into why an employee's behavior may be changing or to suggest a behavior change if needed. This allows early intervention rather than waiting until a problem can be documented which may be too late for the employee-employer relationship.. Typically, with smaller employers who do not have the resources to provide the intervention, situations like repetitive lateness may create the loss of a job. One point of contact for employees tends to produce immediate results.

The localized strategy employment strategy is also a benefit to the employer. A program like the NiCo program must be responsive to the employer if it is to work as efficiently. Disincentives to working on an employment program such as the NiCo employment program are that it may create more work with the weekly evaluations of performance.

The Collaboration - Historical Relationship

The historical relationship was tailored to the local and regional labor market, thus making the NiCo employment project similarly focused. This aspect of the program is one of the eight listed in the Common Social Services Plan as a necessary characteristic. While the historical relationship that facilitated the NiCo project's existence may be situationally specific, it may be possible to replicate this and other characteristics of the program that may have contributed to its overall success.

Minneapolis Employment and Training Program's willingness to take on the role of the temporary employer may have been a function of the historical relationship of the employer and the neighborhood as well. It may be possible to replicate this aspect of the NiCo employment project by using METP again, if they are willing. METP may have interest if the employment opportunities offer livable wage, one of the goals set forward by the Common Social Services Plan. It may be possible to create a temporary employer within one of the social service providers. This would, however, lower the pay transferred to the program participants. Any agency, other than METP, operating as a temporary employer would have to pay unemployment insurance on the participants just as a private agency.

RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

While there are many reservations about the validity of the data, the interviews and data analysis may provide some idea of the general trends of the program population and suggest some general themes that may be helpful when approaching an employment program with a similar population.

The best way to reach the population, not being able to control for or create company interest and friend referral, is to advertise in the paper, use LNB, post flyers, and make other community service and employment agencies aware of the program. This population, however, did not seem to have a predominance of individuals with families, over 60% of the population had no familial

relationships, no dependents. While this may be a result of the employment opportunity, it may be wise to focus on more ways to incorporate the recruitment of such a population.

The people who did not stay at NiCo seemed to earn a higher wage in their previous jobs, this includes the comparison of all program participants, even those without previous employment. Their choice to leave may be a result of motivational factors, (those leaving NiCo also had, on average, more jobs per last year than those staying) however, perhaps more emphasis could be placed on the explanation of the increase in pay beyond probation. A motivational or behavioral component of the 2 day orientation or training could lessen the impact of this as well.

The counselors or community organizers providing service delivery to the employers and clients should attempt to establish trust of both the participant and the employer. There is no conclusive evidence about which approach works best for the clients. To engage the trust of the employer, one important component is the service provider's accessibility to the employer. It is suggested that a one-stop approach would be most convenient. The employment program's strategy must be localized to the employer community and be responsive to their needs.

It is important to have better assessments of the costs to the organization in terms of recruitment, assessment, orientation and training, follow up social service costs/personal relationship, and time sheets. It is imperative that there is some evaluation component to the Stevens Square-Loring Heights employment program. While primarily being funded by NRP dollars, attention should be paid to the needs of future funding sources. With this population in mind, implementation of a method of evaluation that includes data base tracking of clients, may improve the ability to maintain contact with the program population. This longer term follow up information will prove invaluable when new funds are needed to sustain the program's efforts, especially if the unemployment rate changes and the service population increases.

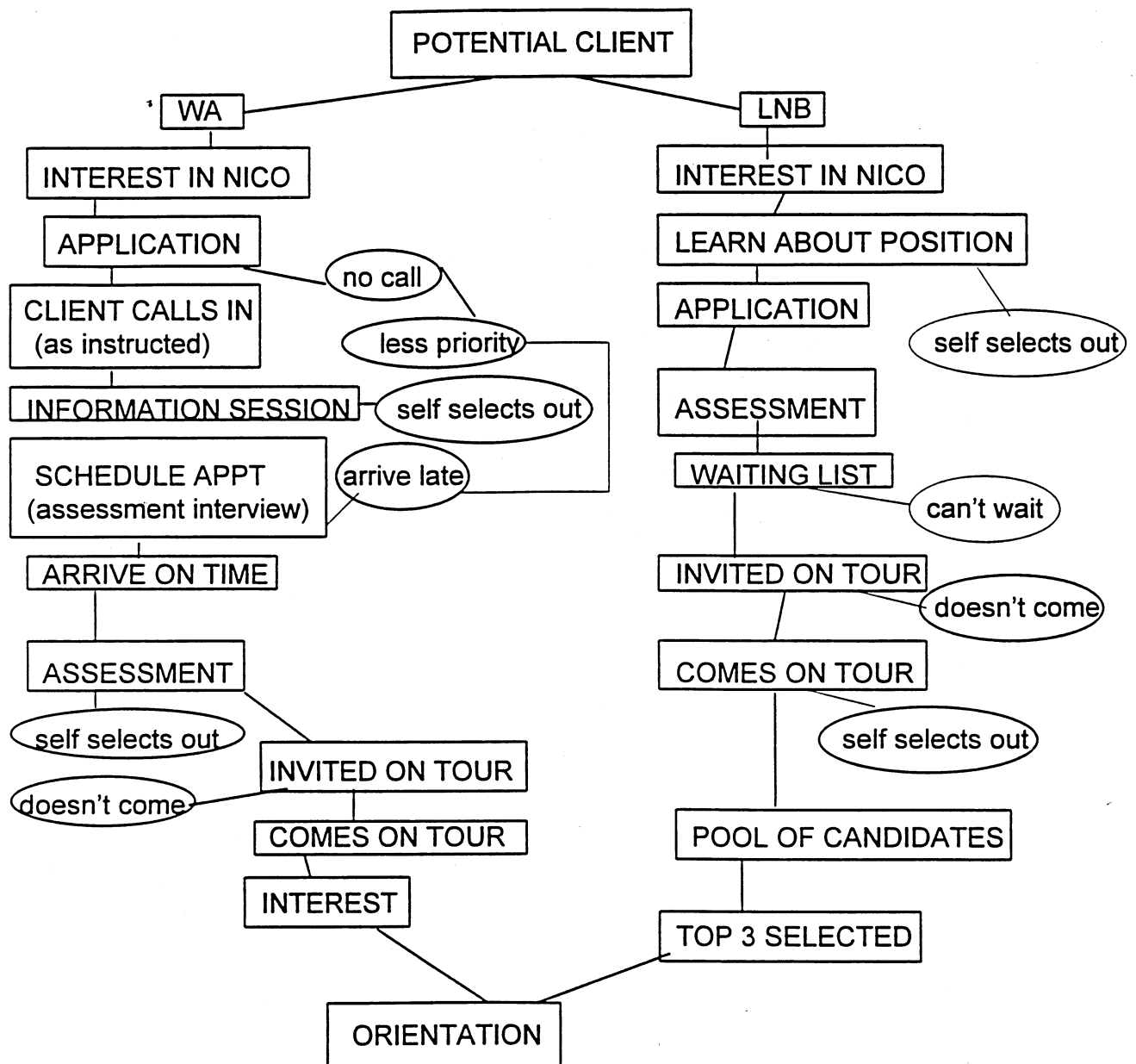
There is a small element that may be best worked out by defining the relationship and the roles of the primary service provider and the others. It might be best to have each contribute to the evaluation results or to have each agree to sponsor one evaluation. The only area of conflict in this collaboration was linked to the reporting of the results that led to the payment for service. Attaching dollars to service provision makes the reporting of results that much more valuable. To insure against frustration between service providers some mechanism should be in place to reduce the influence of one agency over another in the reporting function.

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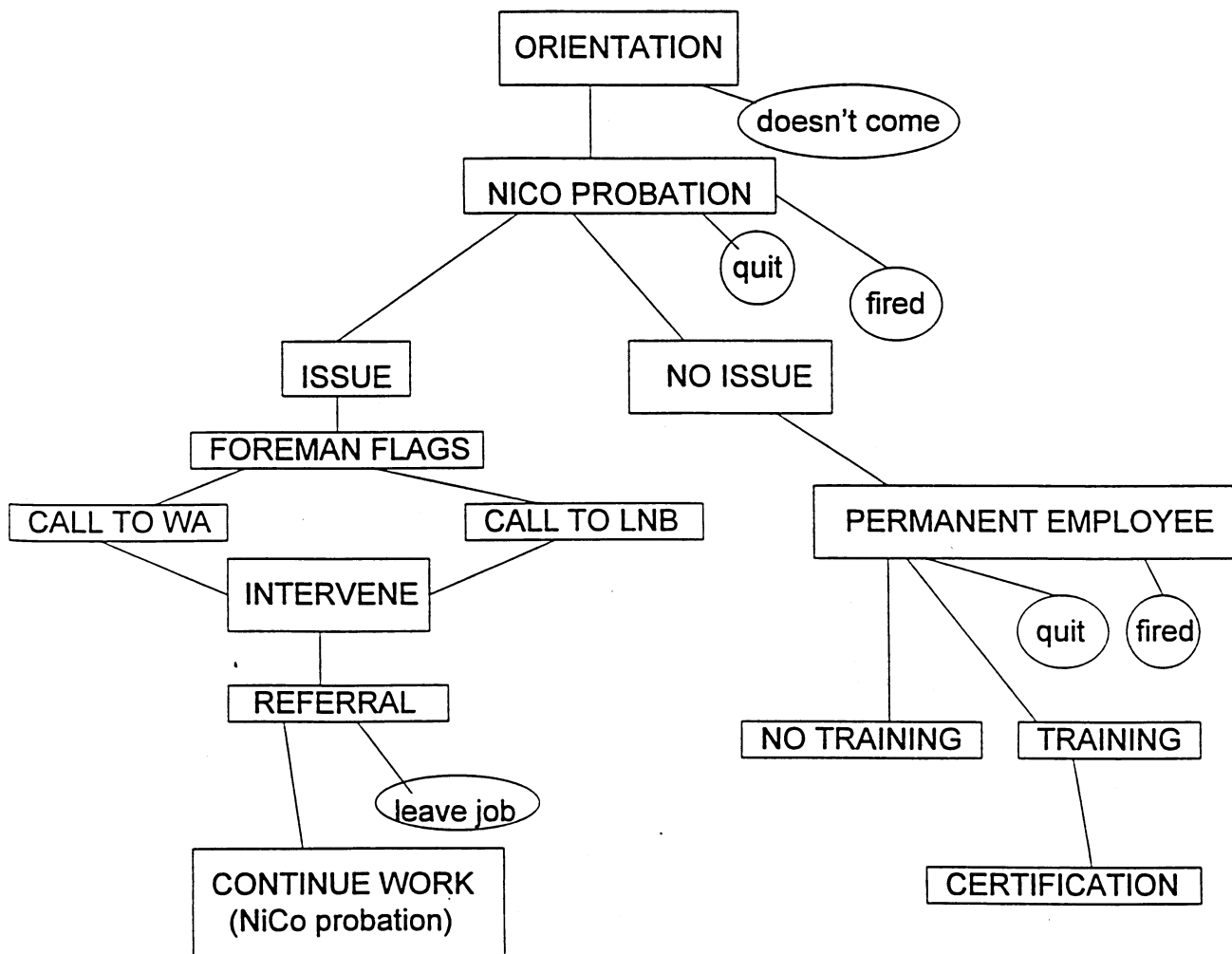
1. Stevens Square-Loring Heights Common Social Services Plan

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1, Program Activities: Recruitment and Assessment



APPENDIX 2, Program Activities: Intervention and Personal Relationship



APPENDIX 3, Research Questions

- What factors that contribute to the success of the NiCo employment program?
- How effective is the program at reaching its overall goals? (Success is defined differently for each of the service providers- staying at NiCo or gaining other livable wage employment as a result of this experience.)
- Do long term social service (including training and orientation) provision/commitment/availability increase the ability of the harder to employee/underemployed to obtain and retain livable wage employment? (This assumes that the population served is harder to employ or unemployed at the time of participation-this assumption must be further examined through data on participants and comparisons with future participant population)
- What components must occur to ensure success of participants? How are their needs met? What aspects of this service provision are essential? relationship or referral, etc.? How long is necessary to continue relationship? (It is assumed that a personal relationship between program participant and counselor will aid in any intervention or referral to supportive services, allowing the participant to maintain employment.)
- Are there alternatives to this intervention for program participants? (Is the population coming from out-of-state, could they be served or referred on arrival through renting organizations...? Is it possible to do reverse commuting-is the population interested?)
- What aspects of the program are useful/working well or not useful/not working well? (orientation, temporary employer aspect, importance of having six in an entering group, etc.) What is most effective way of reaching the target population?
- Are there better approaches-differences in the two styles of service delivery-is one more effective? (both in terms of retention data but also in terms of participants opinions)
- What population is served? Is it similar to that of the targeted population of Common Social Services Plan? (Skills, demographics, previous job experience/retention, etc.)
- What type of return can the neighborhood expect on its investment? How long do the participants expect to stay at the job, in the neighborhood? (Long term economic development or do they leave the neighborhood once attaining a livable wage job? If they leave the neighborhood, does it still maintain some of the benefit?)
- What are the benefits to the employers? Are their needs met? Does this program effectively gather qualified candidates and allow for longer retention than previously attained? What are possible improvements?
- How effective is the collaboration? What aspects of the collaboration insure its effectiveness? Is there continued communication? Is there a clear definition of the program providers' goals? Are they similar?
- Are there other outcomes that arise as a result of the program? Improvements in the neighborhood, economic development, improvements in neighborhood relations with business, with other neighborhoods?

APPENDIX 4.1, Program Population

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS:

AGE DISTRIBUTION:

19-25	9/47	19%
25-35	20/47	43%
35-45	12/47	26%
45+	6/47	13%

RACIAL DISTRIBUTION:

White	5/47	11%
Black	37/47	79%
Hispanic	4/47	9%
Asian	1/47	2%

FAMILY STATUS:

single parent	8/47	17%
2 parent	10/47	21%
no dependents	28/47	60%

*average higher wage for those who leave
NiCo than those who stay:*

LAST WAGE: those with employment
records:

\$7.14 leaving NiCo
\$6.94 staying at NiCo

average, including those with no recent
employment:

\$6.83 leaving NiCo
\$5.73 staying at NiCo

*POPULATIONS (leaving/staying at
NiCo) are similarly distributed amongst:*

- employed/unemployed before NiCo
- public assistance/no public assistance
- offenders/not
- substance dependent/not

PREDOMINANTLY 25-35

PREDOMINANTLY BLACK

**PREDOMINANTLY NO
DEPENDENTS**

**LAST WAGE IS HIGHER FOR
THOSE WHO LEAVE NICO THAN
THOSE WHO STAY**

APPENDIX 4.2, Population Staying at NiCo

24 PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS ARE WORKING AT NICO

7 1ST SHIFT
5 2ND SHIFT
12 3RD SHIFT

12 LNB REFERRALS
12 WA REFERRALS

15 HIRED
9 ON PROBATION

OF THOSE WORKING-AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY-
5 MONTHS
OF THOSE HIRED PERMANENTLY-AVERAGE
LENGTH OF STAY IS 7 MONTHS

6 FEMALES
18 MALES

22-47 AGE RANGE
33.5 AVERAGE AGE OF POPULATION STAYING
19-25 4
25-35 11
35-45 7
45+ 2

2 WHITE
20 BLACK
2 HISPANIC

6 SINGLE PARENTS
2 2 PARENT
15 NO DEPENDENTS
1 OTHER

0-5 RANGE OF DEPENDENTS PER PERSON
.83 AVERAGE DEPENDENTS
15/24 NO DEPENDENTS

4/24 WERE EMPLOYED
5/24 USED SOME KIND OF ASSISTANCE
4/24 OFFENDERS
2/24 SELF REPORTED CHEMICAL DEPENDENCE RECOVERY

APPENDIX 4.3, Population Leaving NiCo Employment

23 PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS HAVE LEFT NICO

1ST SHIFT	26%	6/23
2ND SHIFT	61%	14/23
3RD SHIFT	13%	3/23

15 LNB REFERRALS
8 WA REFERRALS

22 DAYS, AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY
(17 DAYS WITHOUT THE 7 MONTH OUTLIER)

11 QUIT	8.9 DAYS LENGTH OF STAY-(without outlier)
6 FIRED	24.5 average LENGTH OF STAY
6 QUIT/FIRED	11.3 average LENGTH OF STAY

1 FEMALE
22 MALES

RANGE OF AGES: 19-61	19-25	5
34.96 AVERAGE AGE	25-35	9
	35-45	5
	45+	4

3 WHITE
17 BLACK
2 HISPANIC
1 ASIAN

2 SINGLE PARENT
8 2PARENT
13 NO DEPENDENTS

0-8 DEPENDENTS IS THE RANGE
1.3 AVERAGE DEPENDENTS PER PERSON
13/23 HAVE NO DEPENDENTS

\$6.83 AVERAGE LAST WAGE-ALL PARTICIPANTS LEAVING
\$7.14 AVERAGE LAST WAGE-PARTICIPANTS WITH PREVIOUS WORK
HISTORY WHO LEAVE
4/23 WERE EMPLOYED
6/23 USE SOME PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

APPENDIX 4.4, Applicant Data Sheet tables used

APPLICANTS DATA SHEET									
THOSE WHO LEAVE NICO									
PARTICIPANT	SHIFT	REFER	PROGRAM ENTRY DATE	DATE OF EXIT	DAYS	FIRED OR QUIT	GENDER	AGE	RACE
(2) B		3 WA	12/11/95	12/11/95	1	FIRED	m	35	2
(3) B		2 LNB	9/5/95	10/11/95	36	FIRED	m	34	2
(5) B		1 LNB	10/4/95	10/9/95	5	QUIT	m	37	2
(6) C		1 LNB	10/11/95	10/17/95	6	QUIT	m	41	2
(11) F		2 WA	1/8/96	1/19/96	11	QUIT/FIRED	m	35	2
(14) H		1 LNB	1/15/96	3/1/96	45	FIRED	m	25	2
(15) H		1 LNB	1/17/96	3/5/96	47	QUIT	m	37	1
(16) H		2 WA	2/5/96	2/14/96	9	QUIT/FIRED	m	38	2
(21) L		2 WA	11/20/95	11/20/95	1	QUIT	f	19	3
(23) L		2 LNB	10/17/95	11/2/95	15	QUIT	m	61	2
(25) L		2 WA	11/15/95	11/15/95	1	QUIT	m	34	2
(27) M		2 LNB	7/24/95	8/4/95	11	FIRED	m	37	2
(29) M		2 WA	9/25/95	9/29/95	4	FIRED	m	20	2
(30) M		2 WA	12/26/95	1/3/96	8	QUIT	m	32	3
(31) N		2 WA	3/4/96	3/11/96	7	QUIT/FIRED	m	30	5
(36) S		2 WA	10/30/95	12/8/95	38	FIRED	m	57	1
(39) U		1 WA	7/24/95	7/25/95	1	QUIT	m	55	2
(40) W		2 WA	7/24/95	FEBRUARY	210	QUIT	m	48	2
(41) W		3 WA	11/14/95	11/16/95	2	QUIT	m	19	1
(42) W		1 LNB	9/25/95	9/28/95	3	QUIT	m	31	2
(45) W		2 WA	3/4/96	3/19/96	15	QUIT/FIRED	m	27	2
(46) W		2 WA	9/25/95	10/20/95	25	QUIT/FIRED	m	29	2
(47) X		3 WA	11/6/95	11/9/95	3	QUIT/FIRED	m	23	2
23 total	1st 6	wa 15		avg lngth sta	22	q 11	f 1	avg age 34.96	
	2nd 14	lnb 8		w/out cell 21	17	f 6	m 22	range 19-61	
	3rd 3					q/f 6		19-25 5	
								25-35 9	
								35-45 5	
								45+ 4	
								3 white	
								17 black	
								2 hispani	
								1 asian	

APPLICANTS DATA SHEET (continued)						
THOSE WHO LEAVE NICO						
PARTICIPANT	FAMILY STATUS	# dependents <18	LAST HOURLY WAGE	REASON FOR LEAVING	EMPLOYED	PUBLIC ASSISTANCE
(2) B	1	4	\$7.00		NO	FOOD STAMPS
(3) B	2	2	\$5.75		NO	NO
(5) B	4	0	\$6.50		YES	NO
(6) C	2	8	\$11.37		NO	AFDC, FOOD STA
(11) F	4	0	\$6.50		NO	NO
(14) H	2	2	\$5.50		NO	NO
(15) H	4	0	\$0.00		NO	SSI
(16) H	2	1	\$7.51		YES	NO
(21) L	4	0	\$6.50		NO	NO
(23) L	4	0	\$7.00		YES	NO
(25) L	1	3	\$6.50		NO	NO
(27) M	4	0	\$5.50		NO	GENERAL, FOOD
(29) M	4	0	\$6.00		NO	SSI
(30) M	4	0	\$5.50		NO	NO
(31) N	4	0	\$7.50		NO	NO
(36) S	4	0	\$6.00		NO	NO
(39) U	2	2	\$7.00		NO	NO
(40) W	2	3	\$14.75		NO	NO
(41) W	4	0	\$5.50		NO	NO
(42) W	4	0	\$6.25		NO	NO
(45) W	2	2	\$5.50		YES	NO
(46) W	2	3	\$9.50		NO	AFDC, FOOD STA
(47) X	4	0	\$8.00		NO	NO
23 total	2 single par	average 1.3				
	8 2parent	13 persons, no dependents			4/23 were working	
	13 non family member					6/23 some assista
			of those working, avg 7.14 last wage			
			of all 6.83			

[illegible]

THOSE WHO STAY AT NICO						
PARTICIPANT	FAMILY STATUS	FAMILY SIZE	LAST HOURLY WAGE	EMPLOYED	PUBLIC ASSISTANCE	OFFENDER
(1) A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NO	NO	NO
(4) B	1	2	\$0.00	NO	NO	NO
(7) C	1	3	\$6.00	NO	FOOD STAMPS,	NO
(8) C	4	0	\$7.00	NO	NO	NO
(9) C	4	0	\$6.25	NO	NO	NO
(10) D	4	0	\$8.75	NO	NO	NO
(12) G	4	0	\$0.00	NO	NO	YES
(13) GI	4	0	\$7.25	YES	NO	YES
(17) J	4	0	\$6.95	NO	NO	NO
(18) J	4	0	\$6.50	YES	NO	YES
(19) K	4	0	\$5.90	NO	NO	NO
(20) K	2	5	\$7.15	YES	NO	NO
(22) L	4	0	\$5.00	NO	NO	NO
(24) L	2	1	\$7.50	NO	AFDC, FOOD ST	NO
(26) L	4	0	\$7.00	NO	NO	NO
(28) M	1	3	\$0.00	NO	NO	NO
(32) O	1	3	\$6.50	NO	NO	NO
(32) P	4	0	\$7.50	NO	GA	YES
(33) P	3	0	\$6.25	NO	NO	NO
(35) S	4	0	\$0.00	NO	NO	NO
(37) S	1	1	\$8.05	NO	FOOD STAMPS	NO
(38) S	4	0	\$8.25	NO	NO	NO
(43) W	1	1	\$7.00	NO	FOOD STAMPS	NO
(44) W	4	0	\$7.00	YES	NO	NO
6 single	2 2parent	avg dep .83	avg \$5.73 all			
24 total	1 other	15 no dep	4/24 employed	5/24 assist	4/24 offenders	
	15 no dep		avg w/wkhst \$6.94			

APPENDIX 6, Interview Questions

QUESTIONS TO ASK THOSE THAT STAYED ON AT NICO:

INFORMATION TO GATHER BEFORE INTERVIEW:

What phase of the NICO training is the person in?

quit fired probationary 60 days

hired/title

What shift?

Who referred by?

How long had you been out of work?

How do you usually learn of job opportunities?

How did you learn of this one? (How did you hear about it?)

Do you look in community papers/fliers/church/door to door/from a friend/while at LNB/talking
with Larry about something else?

Was it hard to find a job before this?

What kind of jobs have you had?

What kinds of skills do you have?

About how much did you earn? more or less than now?

What is the highest pay you have received?

How many jobs did you have in a year?

What did you do for money between jobs?

Were you eligible for any kind of public assistance before NICO/now?

Did you get any of these before going to work at NICO? If so, how often (once a year, once every
6 months, once a month, more than once a month)

welfare/general assistance

food bank

housing assistance

unemployment

employment and training assistance

transportation subsidies

childcare assistance

Do you still get any of this assistance? If so, how often?

Do you have children who need childcare?

Do you need help in providing it?

Do you need some transportation assistance?

Would you be willing to work in the suburbs if transportation was provided?

Do you like working at NICO?

Do you plan to stay on there?

Do you think you will stay in the neighborhood for awhile? under a year/at least 1
year/2/indefinitely

How long have you been living in the city? Where did you come from-another state, different
part of Minnesota? Why did you come here?

Are you happy with the schedule?
 Do you think you will take advantage of the training that NICO provides?
 What was most helpful about the orientation that LNB/WA provided?
 What was least helpful about the orientation that LNB/WA provided?
 What was good about the person you met with? not so good?
 Was the person helpful/respectful/relate well to your concerns?
 Did you see the person at all after you were at NICO in the probationary period/after being hired permanently? if so, how often?
 Did you have any personal issues with substance abuse/finances/childcare/housing/anything in particular since you started working with NICO?
 Did the person you met with try to help you with any problems you may have had when you work at NICO in probation/now?
 Did you get help from other sources?
 Did they refer you to help? What kinds/How-call on your behalf or give you a phone number?
 How effective were they?
 How did they try to work with you?
 In what ways do you think they could have been more helpful in the assessment and explanation of the position/follow up services?
 Do you think you could/would get help again, if you needed some?
 Do you think that this helped you stay at NICO?

Questions asked those not staying on at NiCo were similarly focused. The public assistance questions were similar for each instance. These were not asked or run through if the program participant gave indication that they were unwilling to answer these questions or if they answered "no" to the first one. The following is the interview conducted with those leaving NiCo employment after having participated in some elements of the program, less the public assistance related questions.

QUESTIONS TO ASK THOSE WHO DIDN'T STAY ON:

INFORMATION TO GATHER BEFORE INTERVIEW:

What phase was the person in when they quit / fired?

probationary 60 days OR hired/title

What shift?

Who referred by?

How long had you been out of work?

How do you usually learn of job opportunities?

How did you learn of this one? (How did you hear about it?)

Do you look in community papers/fliers/church/door to door/from a friend/while at LNB/talking with Larry about something else?

Is it hard to find a job?

What kind of jobs have you had?

What kinds of skills do you have?

About how much did you earn? more or less than now?

What is the highest pay you have received?

How many jobs did you have in a year?

What do you do for money between jobs?

Do you need some transportation assistance to get to work?
Would you be willing to work in the suburbs if transportation was provided?

Did you like working at NICO?

Did you plan to stay on there?

Do you think you will stay in the neighborhood for awhile? under a year/at least 1
year/2/indefinitely

How long have you been living in the city? Where did you come from-another state, different
part of Minnesota? Why did you come here?

Were you happy with the schedule?

What was most helpful about the orientation that LNB/WA provided?

What was least helpful about the orientation that LNB/WA provided?

What was good about the person you met with? not so good?

Was the person helpful/respectful/relate well to your concerns?

Did you see the person at all after you were at NICO in the probationary period/after being hired
permanently? if so, how often?

Did you have any personal issues with substance abuse/finances/childcare/housing/anything in
particular since you started working with NICO?

Did the person you met with try to help you with any problems you may have had when you
worked at NICO?

Did you get help from other sources?

Did they refer you to help? What kinds/How-call on your behalf or give you a phone number?

How effective were they?

How did they try to work with you?

In what ways do you think they could have been more helpful in the assessment and explanation
of the position/follow up services?

Do you think you could/would get help again, if you needed some?

What made it necessary for you to leave NICO?

Were those obstacles addressed by LNB/Whittier or another place (like a church?)

Have you found work elsewhere

Is there some job you wanted more?

APPENDIX 7, Results of the Total Population Interviewed

OF THE TOTAL POPULATION:

15 interviews done on the phone and in person
15 moved, disconnected phones-unable to reach
10 unsuccessful attempts to reach, upwards of 4 attempts to reach per participant
7 pending persons, appointments were made, participants had not shown, time ran out

OF POPULATION INTERVIEWED:

10 staying at NiCo

- average of 4.8 months at NiCo overall in May 1996
- 4 participants of the 1st shift
- 1 participant of the 2nd shift
- 5 participants of the 3rd shift
- 4 participants came from WA referrals
- 6 participants from LNB referrals

5 Leaving NiCo employment

- average of 33 days employment at NiCo
- 2 participants of the 1st shift
- 3 participants of the 2nd shift
- 0 participants of the 3rd shift
- 1 referral came from WA
- 4 referrals came from LNB

THE TOTAL POPULATION INTERVIEWED:

Employment situations before being hired at NiCo:

- 1 had full time
- 2 had part time jobs
- 4 were unemployed for 1-3 months
- 1 was unemployed for 6-12 months

How they usually find jobs-1 person listed four ways, 3 persons listed three ways, 5 persons listed two ways, 6 persons listed one way they usually locate employment. Of these answers given, the frequencies follow:

Papers: community, the <i>Employment Paper</i> , the <i>Star Tribune</i> , etc.	9 responses
Loring Nicollet Bethlehem	4 responses
Door to door	3 responses
Flyers	3 responses
Friends	2 responses
Temporary positions	2 responses
Job Service Center/other service providers	2 responses
word of mouth	1 response

joblink	1 response
STRIDE	1 response
Whittier Alliance	1 response

Those staying at NiCo find out about jobs through papers predominantly, door to door, flyers, and through LNB. One response was recorded for each: joblink, STRIDE, WA, and other service agencies.

Those leaving NiCo employment were more likely to find jobs through papers, friends, flyers, and LNB.

When you "mostly do temporary work, you get stuck. Don't want to turn them down, you want them to keep calling. Besides temporaries are good to collect experience."

How they heard about NiCo employment-one response was given by each participant:

	Staying	Leaving	Total response
NiCo Interest	5		5
Referral to LNB/WA from other agencies	2		2
Friends	2	1	3
Recruited (by WA)	1	1	2
LNB		3	3

Is it hard to find a job:

	Staying	Leaving
YES	4	2
NO	5	2

Some of the longer responses to the difficulty of finding a job:

It is "kind of hard with kids",

It is not hard to get a job, it is only hard to get a job that pays a wage that one can live off of. Knowing your way around the community is part of the ease of looking for a job, but still hard to find livable wage employment. It's hard to find a "good job." It's "not really hard, depends on the type of job."

Not hard if you have adequate transportation, "transportation is the key."

Not hard to find a job if "you are willing to work, lots of jobs out there-full time is harder, part time is easy."

It is hard to find a job "especially when you are hearing impaired without much of a work record."

"It's not hard at all through LNB." (The ease at finding jobs through LNB may be part of the reason that the three of their direct referrals that were interviewed have all left NiCo employment.)

Related skills:

All of the program participants (asked the question), except one, had previous skills that were somewhat related to the work that they were expected to do at NiCo. This may be an important factor to the success of the program.

The following is a listing of skills participants interviewed had before entering NiCo employment:

<u>Staying</u>	<u>Leaving</u>
machinery and hairstyling	warehousing
factory work, packaging, agricultural (all fast-paced, working with hands)	factory, vacuum press, mail clerk, electrical assembly
certified welder, forklift, machining, boiler operator	foundry
wood products, printed circuit board assembly	printed circuit board technician
landscaping, forklift operation	
supervisor in retail	
meat packing, upholsterer	
small parts assembly, metal stamping, packaging	
factory work, slaughterhouses	

Earning same, more or less at NiCo than usual:

(This data is self-reported from the program participant interviews, but accurately reflects an overall trend in the data gathered from the client data sheets.) Those leaving NiCo employment tended to earn more at their previous employment than those that stay on at NiCo.

	<u>Staying</u>	<u>Leaving</u>
earning same as before	3	2
more at NiCo than before	5	0
less at NiCo than before	1	3

One individual claimed to be earning less at NiCo than usual. Actual self-reported wages show that he would have made more as a permanent employee than previous earnings.

The range of previous earnings is reported (through interviews) to be as high as \$15 per hour. This wage, however, is not for permanent full time work. This individual reported being able to start at \$17 per hour at any time as a certified welder doing arch welding, however, acknowledging the potential for lay offs and that this wage is not sustainable. This person also felt that they could earn a great deal more in other situations because of the ability to work overtime at other jobs.

Number of jobs last year: (for those asked)

Staying

3 persons had 2 jobs in the last year
2 persons had 3 jobs in the last year
2 persons had over 3 jobs in the past year

Leaving

3 persons had over 3 jobs in the past year
1 person had 3 jobs per year

1 person had 2 jobs in the last year

While this is not statistically significant, and may not be reflective of the whole participant population, it may be that the trend for persons leaving NiCo employment is to have more jobs per year than those who choose to stay at NiCo. It may be a behavior pattern for this population in general, all of the sample had over 2 jobs in the last year. Perhaps some type of motivational training could be incorporated into the training.

What do you do for money between jobs?

There is a tendency among those leaving NiCo employment to rely on temping as a source of income for the period of time in between jobs. While not conclusive, 2 of the 4 participants interviewed of this group mentioned temping as a source of income and none of the persons staying at NiCo mentioned temping. Use of public assistance was mentioned equally in the two groups. Not using anything for money for the period of time in between employment was mentioned equally in both groups. The participants staying at NiCo mentioned reliance on savings while the group leaving NiCo made no mention of savings.

Interested in reverse commuting?

This was asked hypothetically for those working at NiCo and those currently employed. Of all interviewed (and asked the question), three participants felt that they would not be interested in taking a bus to the suburbs to work and one was unsure. Many of those answering that they would willing to do it or willing to consider it, answered with qualifiers:

Willing to take the opportunity...

"for the right money," "if pay was good," "for more money," "that's where all the jobs are," "would be helpful."

One person would do the bus but it must be convenient, "that's the most important thing," and qualified by saying "for \$8 an hour and up."

One person felt that "a majority of the community would do it" after answering emphatically that he would.

Two of the three negative responses were from women with children who felt that this would be too hard to do with the responsibility of children. One person felt that the bus is "too unreliable, it would be hard for folks with kids in school, and in bad weather..."

One person had come to the program as a result of wanting "to be closer in the winter" than the job he had that took "3/4 of an hour to get there on a special van."

Staying at NiCo (before left, were they thinking of staying)& taking advantage of the training?

11 like(-d) NiCo, and 4 thought it was OK. All felt positively about the job and all but one person interviewed is (or was) planning to stay at NiCo for the foreseeable future.

One person felt that they would not past the training to become a certified electroplater, using that accreditation on their resumes for future employment. This sentiment was repeated by another employee, "that'll be around for a long time," noting that some employees had left NiCo and could make more at other companies.

One person felt that their limited English would impede their ability to take advantage of the training and would probably stay for one year.

Stay in neighborhood?

(of those asked, some of those listed as staying in the neighborhood were positive about it-may not have said, 'I am staying...')

Staying at NiCo:

6 were not sure if they would stay in the neighborhood

3 were planning to stay in the neighborhood

Leaving NiCo:

3 were planning to stay in the neighborhood

1 was not sure

1 was not staying in the neighborhood

Those persons sure they were planning to stay tended to be individuals who had lived in the neighborhood for much of their lives. One person was planning on staying in the same place, a place that LNB had helped him to locate upon his arrival to the city.

2 participants in the sample mentioned that they felt they would leave the neighborhood in order to live in a home. If there are homes to be owned in the neighborhoods, it may be that the neighborhood could capitalize on its investment in the employment training of its residents by promoting home ownership, or marketing this availability. ("may stay, may want to get a house," "move out of the neighborhood to the suburbs and get a house"/While this is not tallied in those wanting to buy a home and leave the neighborhood, it is interesting, "may move on and buy a house in South Dakota.")

How long have they been in the city, where did they come from?

About half of those interviewed were from other areas within the past five years.

They were coming from California (for the jobs), Chicago and Gary (two participants came from Chicago, one came for the "good jobs", 1 from Gary), Missouri, Omaha (for the jobs and the economy), and Wisconsin (for the jobs).

ORIENTATION

Many indicated that they were relatively happy with 2 day orientation, although when asked, not many remembered that they had participated. Occasionally, participants were brought into the program as replacements for those who dropped out during their two month cycle. Orientations were conducted when 6 participants were scheduled and the employer had called in to request new recruits. This would generally occur every two months.

WALKTHROUGH

The walkthrough received positive responses from all asked. There were some suggestions made by the participants.

TIMESHEET

5 participants were not positive about the time sheet system. 4 of those interviewed are still employed by NiCo. For this sample, it would appear that the dislike of the time sheets was not a large enough negative factor for them to leave employment. This may not, however, be true of the whole population, of the participants interviewed, only 5 had left the program.

GO BACK to WA or LNB: Some of the things participants mention about this relationship:

10 of the 13 persons asked this question, were positive about their relationship with the service providers that they used to obtain employment at NiCo. There were 3 negative responses from the population interviewed about their relationship with the service providers. Each of these three participants is still working at NiCo. While this would make it appear that the personal relationship factor did not seem to have an effect with this population, it is important to note that this may not be a representative sample.

It is also important to note that of those who received service, many felt that they could go back to LNB beyond their employment at NiCo or their probationary period.

Where intervention was possible, there were two persons leaving NiCo who felt as though there was nothing that the service provider could have done to help them stay.